

The Pope Is Wrong; Jesus Is Right

Editor's Note: This is part one of a three-part series by Dr. Jim Garlow. He compares biblical principles with announcements by Pope Francis. Watch for the other parts in the series, coming soon to Charisma News.

Pope Francis, 83, endorsed civil unions for same-sex couples in a 2019 interview with Mexican broadcaster Televisa. The never-before-seen clips were aired last week in the new documentary *Francesco*.

Let me cut to the chase. The pope is wrong. Jesus is right.

In Matthew 19, Jesus quoted Genesis and defined the nature of the “one flesh” relationship. Two men can’t do that. Two women can’t do that, based on a look at the Hebrew words used. Jesus wasn’t calling for “civil unions.” Jesus was affirming holy, sacred marriage. Sexual actions between people of the same sex are morally wrong. An ecclesiastical leader has no authority to call right what God labels an abomination.

Previous Popes Were Right

The pope is wrong. Previous popes were right.

The most spectacular teaching on the human body and sexuality came from 129 Wednesday lectures by Pope John II between Sept. 5, 1979, and Nov. 28, 1984, titled “The Redemption of the Body and Sacramentality of Marriage,” but better known as “Theology of the Body.”

To my knowledge, there is no comparable teaching as exhaustive on the topic anywhere in Protestantism. It is quite stunning. Imagine preaching a sermon series that is 129 weeks long.

Christopher West, a lay Catholic theologian, picked up on

these talks and began lecturing on the theme. He wrote a book by the same title, *Theology of the Body*.

West and I became friends, and he once asked me if I might want to take the book, “de-Catholicize it,” add distinctly evangelical Protestant language and rerelease it together. I never accomplished that.

Let me be blunt. Pope Francis needs to go back and read what Pope John Paul II taught. He would learn something.

He Was Previously Right

The current Pope Francis is wrong. The old Pope Francis was right. Let me explain.

My wife and I were invited to the Vatican in November 2014 along with 300 others—both Catholics and protestants—as well as those from other religions.

Pope Francis spoke to us on marriage. It was good. The current pope needs to go back and read what he said then.

One cannot both affirm the scriptural sanctity of marriage and, at the same time, affirm so-called “same-sex unions.” They are biblically mutually exclusive. Sodomy is wrong. Marriage conjugality is sacred.

Raymond Burke Is Right

The pope is wrong. Traditional Catholics are right.

Cardinal Raymond Burke, a member of the Vatican’s highest court, stated correctly that Pope Francis’ statement is contrary to Catholic teachings. It gives new meaning to the old rhetorical question: “Is the Pope a Catholic?”

Unfortunately, one can now answer, “No.”

Archbishop Chaput Is Right

The pope is wrong. Traditional Catholics are right. Let me expand on this.

I grew up on a farm near Concordia, Kansas, with a population of 6,000. The owners of the local funeral home were the highly respected Catholic Chaput Brothers who conducted the memorial services for my grandparents, father, sister and brother.

One of them had a son, Charlie, slightly older than I. He went on to become the archbishop of Denver and then Philadelphia. He is one of the most courageous, bold, outspoken of all America's archbishops. I am proud to call him my friend and come from the same tiny farm town.

Archbishop Cordileone Is Right

The pope is wrong. Traditional Catholics are right.

One of my great privileges in the battle to defend marriage—Proposition 8—in 2008 in California was to work with the remarkable Salvatore Cordileone, who went on to become archbishop of San Francisco. He was and is a close personal friend whom I respect and admire. He stood—under terrific pressure—to defend marriage.

Brian Brown Is Right

The largest pro-marriage movement in the world is led by my good friend Brian Brown, who leads the National Organization for Marriage in the U.S. and the World Congress on Families on a global scale. It is overwhelmingly run and funded by Catholics.

He is a stellar leader who is internationally opposed by the wicked George Soros. A devout Catholic, Brian knows the foolishness of affirming same- sex “civil unions.”

The Pope Is Wrong

But, you say, “Jim, you are an evangelical Protestant. You

have no right to speak about the Catholic pope.”

There was a time when Catholics and Protestants were totally separate. In fact, they were at war. It might be called the grand divide, which began in 1517.

But liberalism crept into both Catholicism and Protestantism in the late 1800s and the first half of the 1900s, causing the great split in both groups. “Liberalism,” at the time, meant the abandonment of all traditional teaching.

Then came several cultural attacks, such as the one on babies in the womb and on the definition of marriage, which brought biblically grounded evangelicals and traditional Catholics together in the grand realignment of the 1980s and 1990s. Suddenly evangelicals and traditional Catholics began working together for the sanctity of life in the womb and the sacredness of marriage. In reality, the Catholics were fighting to defend life in the womb a full decade before evangelicals even “showed up for battle.”

As an evangelical Protestant, I have far more in common with a traditional Catholic than I do a liberal Protestant. I have virtually nothing theologically in common with a liberal Protestant.

But something has occurred within Protestantism, and even evangelicalism. In the first half of the 1900s, there was a split between liberals and Bible- believing conservatives. In the last 20 years, it has split evangelicalism also.{eoa}

The next installment of the series focuses on what the Bible has to say about the LGBTQ-plus community. It will appear on Charisma News tomorrow, Thursday, Oct. 29.

Dr. Jim Garlow, author of 21 books, has pastored for over 4 1/2 decades and has done over 1,500 print, radio and TV interviews. He is CEO of Well Versed, a ministry that brings biblical principles of governance to government leaders

through weekly Bible studies in the U.S. Congress, the United Nations in New York City and through private meetings with government leaders. He is heard daily on 800 radio outlets.